

Remarks:

The Abstract has been objected to. The Abstract has been replaced.

Claims 1-16 and 20-21 remain in this application. Claims 13, and 17-19 have been canceled.

Claims 1, 2, 6 and 14 have been amended. Claims 20 and 21 have been added to more particularly claim Applicant's invention.

Claims 1-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hajianpour (US6286401).

With regard to amended claim 1, Hajianpour fails to disclose "the engagement tip having a polygonal cross sectional shape including flats and vertices, the engagement tip being slit through flats only and the vertices being left intact such that upon expansion of the engagement tip the vertices bite into the workpiece". Hajianpour's tip is slit through the vertices thus reducing the number of vertices that engage and bite into the vertices of the workpiece. As pointed out in Applicant's specification at paragraph [0019], "it is believed, by the present inventors, to be advantageous to avoid the vertices 32 such that they remain intact. The vertices 32 present an edge that can bite into the corresponding vertices of the workpiece". Hajianpour's arrangement negates this advantage of Applicant's invention. Amended claim 1 does not read on Hajianpour and is therefore allowable over Hajianpour.

Claims 2-12 and 14-16 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for the same reasons as claim 1.

Amended claim 2 is further allowable over Hajianpour because Hajianpour fails to disclose "wherein the engagement tip has a triangular cross sectional shape".

Amended claim 6 is further allowable over Hajianpour because Hajianpour fails to disclose "the actuator shaft second end having a blunt cylindrical tip that abuts the tapered portion of the cannula nearer the segment bases than the segment tips, the actuator shaft second end biasing the segments apart near the segment bases such that the segments bow outwardly between the segment bases and the segment tips when the engagement tip is engaged with a workpiece".

Claims 17-19 have been canceled.

New claim 20 has been added to more particularly claim applicant's invention. New claim 20 finds support in the specification in paragraph [0026]. With regard to new claim 20, Hajianpour fails to disclose "the actuator biasing the segments apart near the segment bases such that the segments bow elastically outwardly between the segment bases and the segment tips when the engagement tip is engaged with a workpiece". Hajianpour's actuator extends well past the segment bases to bias the segments at their insertion into the workpiece as seen in FIGS. 4, 6, 8, and 9. Hajianpour's arrangement provides for a rigid expansion that risks breakage of his tip and/or workpiece. The advantages of Applicant's segments bowing elastically outwardly are pointed out in paragraph [0026] of the specification. New claim 20 does not read on Hajianpour and is therefore allowable over Hajianpour.

New claim 21 has been added to more particularly claim applicant's invention. New claim 21 finds support in the specification in paragraph [0025]. With regard to new claim 21, Hajianpour fails to disclose "the stop being positioned to limit the outward biasing of the engagement tip segments to a range within the elastic limits of the segments such that even if the actuator is fully seated without a workpiece in place, the segments will undergo no permanent deformation and will return to their original position when the actuator is withdrawn".

Hajianpour fails to appreciate the need to protect the engagement tip from accidental damage if expanded without a workpiece and Hajianpour's drawings show that his actuator shaft has sufficient travel to extend all the way through and well past the engagement tip to over expand the tip; see FIGS. 4, 6, 8, and 9. Applicant explains the advantages of the protective arrangement of new claim 21 in paragraph [0025]. New claim 21 does not read on Hajianpour and is therefore allowable over Hajianpour.

Applicant believes that the claims remaining in this case are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicant by telephone with any questions about the content of this amendment or to discuss allowable subject matter to facilitate placing this case in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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